

## Combine the Advantages of Classroom and Distance to Enhance the Learning Potential: A Guide to Develop a Project at University Level

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**Abstract:** The education politics have been a national Portuguese priority in recent years, given its strategically interest in the world-wide context. It matters to rethink the strategy of qualification, of mobility and certification of the pupils, of the human resources in a optics of continuous formation throughout the life, of a formation with a bigger degree of innovation, severity and requirement, a time that the technological mutations and the rapidity with that if they succeed, imply that the qualification of the people is today the main critical factor of success for the competitiveness and the development sustainable and supported of any region and/or country. It increases, still, that in a world each more complex, changeable and uncertain time, where all the economies compete between itself of a globalized form, the areas of the knowledge, in general, and of the educational formation, in particular, is crucial and decisive factors for the affirmation of the economies and developed regions. In this way, the increase of the severity and the requirement will lead unequivocally to a bigger efficiency of the educative processes and to a bigger effectiveness of the formation.

**Keywords:** Creating e-Learning Courses, Implementation Strategy, Knowledge Exchange, Financial Contribution, SWOT, and Balance Scorecard.

### INTRODUCTION

The challenges to work on a knowledge based global market is a driven for take advantage of the rapid development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) on internet-based collaboration. In Portugal, the distance learning started in the 80s with the program «Tele-escola», where students attended lectures at home through the television, interact with teachers by phone and made exams three times a year in the nearest school. This distance learning was more passive than pro-active. Since those times, several programs tried to implement a better interaction between all parts, but there was still the problem of resources in schools and at home, limited by governmental financing and by family's availability. A program aimed the university students is still working since that times, called «Universidade Aberta». The incentive to development and get higher education in Portugal were made last year with the support to acquire personal computers and internet connection for all needed families (Project Magalhães). Nowadays, the proposed project is easier and more suitable for all parts.

The present project is called DEEB (Distance Education E-learning Bridge). DEEB project created a zero year of studying, working as a path to a smoother transition from high school to University.

The main contribution of the present paper is the definition of the strategy to a sustainable, true active and long term duration e-learning project.

### Deeb Implementation Analysis

#### Overview

The mission of the DEEB is to promote the formation of pupils of high schools education, narrowing relations between these and the Universities and developing activities of Research and Development (R&D) essential for one better adaptation in the transition for the academic life. The vision of the DEEB is to have been the pioneer, to be a reference in engineering the University level in the country and to affirm itself in Portugal and in the foreigner countries.

Table 1 in appendix shows the values of DEEB and their relevance.

#### Strategy

To understand the relation ratio of the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving the objective of the project, a SWOT matrix definition is shown in table 2 in the appendix. SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture.

To define the essential strategic initiatives that the organization must assume for the fulfillment of the strategic plan of DEEB, table 3 in the appendix defines all the critical strategic initiatives so that the organization is apt to materialize its strategic

goals. It identifies the impact of these initiatives in the strategic goals of the scorecard map.

In accordance with the displayed one in the previous activities, the strategically vectors are: - Allotment of information - To identify the best strategically lines of motivation of pupils of the secondary one - To offer to education/formation directed to the necessities of the customers - Recognition appraised and concorrencial of the institution and its spreading 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>

strategically vector can be added and be called “To motivate and to catch pupils”. 4<sup>th</sup> will be assigned by “Recognition of the Institution”. For considering pertinent the support of project, I add the strategically vector “To increase and to diversify prescription sources”. Rank this, Figure 1 in the appendix presents the strategic map. The strategic map is defined by the Balance ScoreCard approach.

**Table 1: DEEB values**

Value	Description	Relevance
Focus on students	Continuously approach to the students needs, expertise and interests	The students are the main focus: they are the input and the output of the project
Flexibility	Know the government aims and supports and quick adapt to it	Efficiency and effectiveness can only be reached with strength global implementation
Dedication	Really know the importance of better education	Education is a path to self esteem, finance improvement, stability, competitiveness, among others
Education of Excellency	Aim the best level of recognition and reputation	Treat this as the dogma, believing that there are sacrosanct and non-negotiation issues

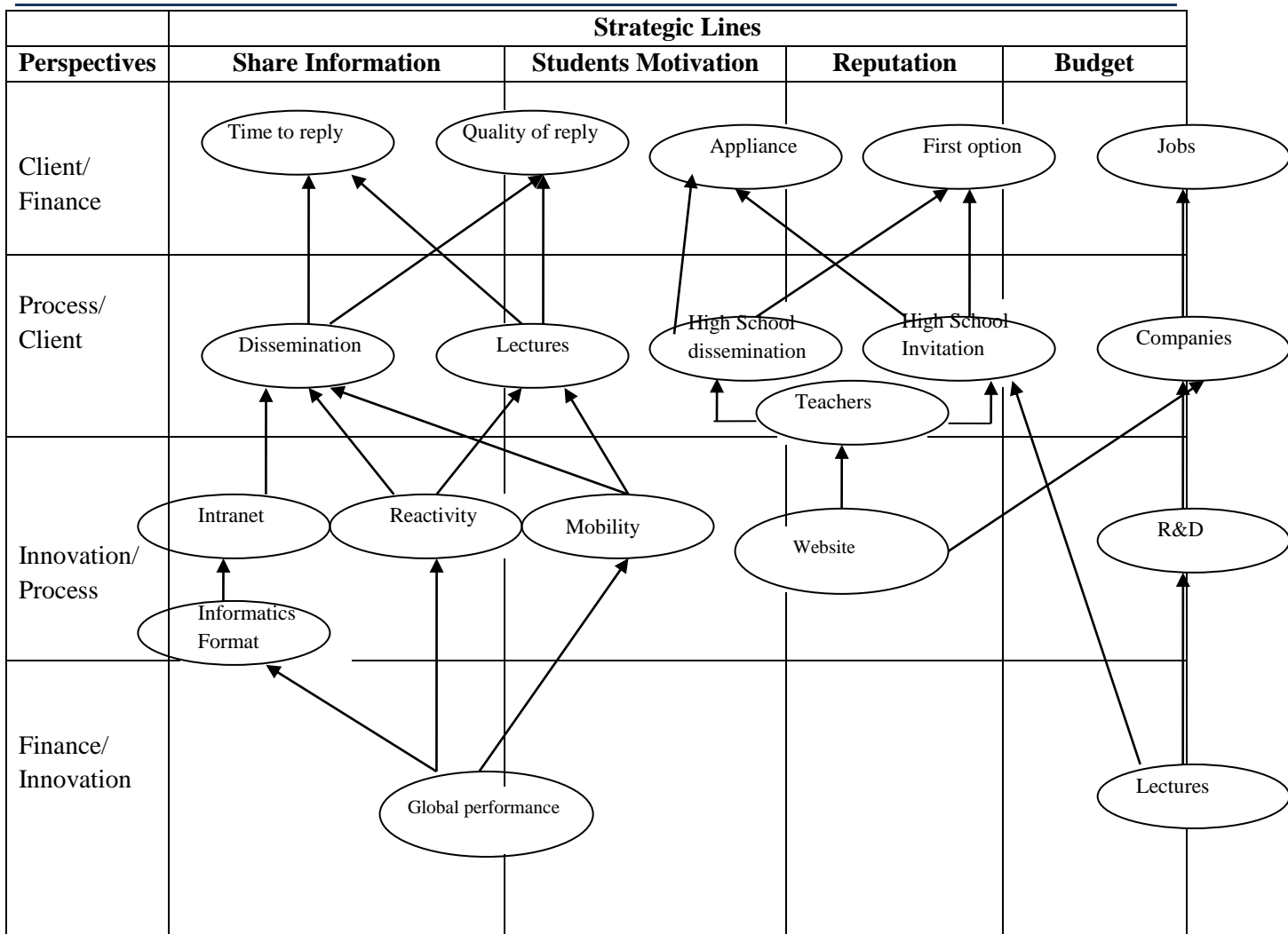
**Table 2: SWOT matrix**

		Strengths				Weakness			
		University Bureaucracy	Teachers time overdue	Students requirements	Infra-structures, limitations and informatics' restrictions	Autonomy to lecture planning	Simple and flexible organic structure	Maturity (resources management, communication structure, leadership and general management)	Transnational education (possibility to spread to an international level)
<b>Threats</b>	Governmental financing reducing	-	-						
	Instability relations between high school teachers and Government		-			+	+		
	High school students reducing			-					
<b>Opportunities</b>	New, needs and relevant issue, in line with Government strategy					+			+
	University reputation and dissemination					+			+
	New opportunity business branch	-					+	+	+
	Project Magalhães							+	+
	Citizen education level as a priority and Human Development Index (HDI)							+	+
	Interdisciplinary, inter geographical and intercultural					+	+	+	+

	exchanges								
	Lack of competition	-					+	+	+

**Table 3: Initiatives and goals matrix per perspective**

Initiatives	Perspective	Goals								Total
		Budget	Human Resources	Time to reply	Quality on reply	Appliances	1 <sup>st</sup> option	Professional	Autonomy	
Reduce reply time	Client	low	high	3	2					5
Dissemination to students		low	high	2	3	3	3			11
Students satisfy ratio		low	high	1	2	3	3		2	11
Number of internet processes		low	medium	2	2					4
Percentage of action plans	Process	low	medium	3	3			2	2	10
Actions to better interactivity between areas		medium	medium	3	3	3		3	3	15
Number of simplified processes		low	medium	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Number of processes on ICT		low	medium	2	3	3	3		1	12
Internal quality of service		medium	medium	3	3			1	2	9
Online services		medium	high	3	3	1	1	1	2	11
Appliances to improve	Finance	medium	high					2	3	5
Business and employers connection		medium	medium			2	2	3	3	10
Cash flow		medium	medium						3	3
Cost management		high	high					1	2	3
Finance bureaucracy simplification		high	high	3	2				3	8
Formation on ICT	Innovation	high	high	3	3	2	2	3	3	16
ICT companies relation		high	high	3	3	2	2	3	3	16
ICT ratio implementation		medium	medium	3	3	2	2	3	3	16



**Figure 1:** Strategic Lines by Balance ScoreCard approach

**CONCLUSION**

There is a great opportunity to implement an e-learning project in Portugal in several areas. The Universities have the potential to begin a real knowledge global market with the internet based technologies.

The project proposed is a driven and a motivation for future projects within the communities.

The limitations and drawbacks are only in the financing, but since this project is aligning with the Government strategy there is strength to avoid that.

The applications are not only for high schools and Universities but also for ECTS lectures and professional formation, for instance.

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